

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6249

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 02221

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, ESTC, EALR, CU, BE, XM

SUBJECT: CUBA: VISIT OF BELGIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE TO HAVANA

1. FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR FOR LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS (AMB. PANIS) TOLD US THAT BELGIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE, MICHEL TOUSSAINT, WOULD PROBABLY GO TO CUBA ON OFFICIAL TRIP MARCH 15-22. PANIS SAID MINISTER TOUSSAINT INVITED BY CUBAN COUNTERPART LAST SUMMER, AND TRIP ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 6. DUE TO DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT REQUIRING HIS PRESENCE, TOUSSAINT TOLD CUBANS HE WOULD POSTPONE TRIP UNTIL AFTER JULY. NOW, ACCORDING TO PANIS, TOUSSAINT'S PARLIAMENTARY SCHEDULE HAS CLEARED AND HE WISHES TO GO. CUBAN EMBASSY IN BRUSSELS HAS TOLD HIM THAT 15-22 DATES ARE NOT AVAILABLE BUT TOUSSAINT IS PUSHING FOR VISIT ON THOSE DATES THROUGH BELGIAN AMBASSADOR ALLARD IN HAVANA. TRADE MISSION TO CUBA OF BELGIAN BUSINESSMAN, ORIGINALLY ORGANIZED TO COINCIDE WITH TOUSSAINT'S HAVANA VISIT, IS CURRENTLY IN CUBA UNTIL MARCH 14.

2 AMBASSADOR PANIS TOLD US THAT PURPOSE BEHIND TOUSSAINT'S ACCEPTANCE OF INVITATION WAS PROMOTION OF BELGIAN EXPORTS TO CUBA. HE ADDED THAT TOUSSAINT MIGHT OFFER CUBANS CREDITS FOR PURCHASE OF BELGIAN GOODS. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS POSSIBILITY THAT TOUSSAINT AND CUBAN COUNTERPART WOULD SIGN COOPERATION AGREEMENT; CUBANS AND BELGIANS HAD BEEN EXCHANGING NOTES AND DRAFTS ON SUBJECT FOR NUMBER OF MONTHS. PANIS CHARACTERIZED POSSIBLE AGREEMENT AS "STANDARD EMPTY FRAMEWORK"

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WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR MIXED COMMISSION TO MEET AND TALK

PERIODICALLY, " AND LITTLE MORE".RENNER

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